

OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS RENDERED BY THE INTER- NATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

Edited by

FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.

Secretary to the Commission

VOLUME 1. Part II. Pp. 87-94.

OPINION 2

The nature of a systematic name

LONDON :

Printed by Order of the International Commission on
Zoological Nomenclature

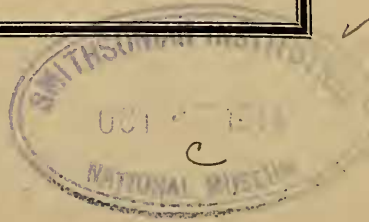
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1944

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Issued 12th July, 1944



INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF *OPINION 1*

The Officers of the Commission

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Executive Secretary : Dr. Charles Wardell Stiles (U.S.A.).

Recording Secretary : Professor F. C. von Maehrenthal (Germany).

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Professor F. C. von MAEHRENTHAL (Germany) (*Recording Secretary to the Commission*).

Professor F. OSBORN (U.S.A.).

OPINION 2.

THE NATURE OF A SYSTEMATIC NAME.

SUMMARY.—The Commission is unanimously of the opinion that a *name*, in the sense of the Code, refers to the designation by which the actual objects are known. In other words, we name the objects themselves, not our conception of said objects. Names based upon hypothetical forms have, therefore, no status in nomenclature and are not in any way entitled to consideration under the Law of Priority. Examples: *Pithecanthropus* Haeckel, 1866,¹ being the name of an hypothetical genus, has no status under the Code, and does not invalidate *Pithecanthropus* Dubois, 1894²; *Gigantopora minuta* Looss, 1907,³ *n. g., n. sp.*, has no status under the Code, since it is admittedly the name of a fantastic unit, not based upon any actual objects.

Editorial Notes by Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

NOTE I.

This *Opinion* was unanimously adopted by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature at their Session held at Boston in August 1907.

2. The following eight (8) Members of the Commission were present at that Session and accordingly voted in favour of this *Opinion* :—

Blanchard; von Graff; Hoyle; Jordan (D. S.); Osborn; Stejneger; Stiles; and Studer.

3. The following seven (7) Members of the Commission were not

¹ *Pithecanthropus* Haeckel, 1866, *Gen. Morphol.* 2: clx.

² *Pithecanthropus* [Dubois], 1894 (April), *Versl. Mijuw.*, 4° Kwart. 1893 (*Suppl. to Javasche Courant* No. 32): 14; Dubois, 1894 [? June], *Pithecanthropus erectus, eine menschenaehnliche Uebergansform aus Java*: 1. [As these references show, this name was published anonymously by Dubois in April of the same year (1894) as that in which he later published his main contribution to this subject.]

³ *Gigantopora* Looss, 1907, *Zool. Anz.* 31: 610. Quite apart from the reasons given in the present *Opinion*, the name *Gigantopora* Looss, 1907, would have been invalid, since it is a homonym of *Gigantopora* Ridley, 1881, *Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* 1881: 47 (Bryozoa).

present at the Boston Session of the International Commission and are not recorded as having voted on the present *Opinion* :—

Dautzenberg; Horst; Jentink; Joubin; Maehrenthal; Schulze; and Wright.

NOTE 2.

This *Opinion* was first published on 18th October 1907 in *Science*, New York 26 : 522. It was published also in the report submitted by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to the Seventh International Congress of Zoology which appeared in the *Proceedings* of that Congress issued in 1912. In the meanwhile, it had been reprinted in July 1910 (*Smithsonian Publication* 1938 : 5-6) when the Smithsonian Institution first undertook to publish the *Opinions* rendered by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

NOTE 3.

This *Opinion* gives the Commission's interpretation of Article 25 of the International Code on a question not dealt with in express terms in that Article, namely the status (if any) for the purposes of the Law of Priority of names based upon hypothetical forms. In view of this *Opinion*, Article 25 is therefore to be interpreted as prescribing that names based upon hypothetical forms have no status in nomenclature and are therefore not entitled to any consideration under the Law of Priority. Such a name stands in relation to Article 25 in the same position as a *nomen nudum*, that is to say : it has no status (and therefore no availability) as from the date on which it was so published and any subsequent author is free to republish the name in question in any sense that he may choose. A name so republished is available under the Code, provided that it complies with the requirements of Article 25 and, in the case of names published on, or before, 31st December 1930, the requirements of *Opinion* 1.⁴

FRANCIS HEMMING

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on Zoological Nomenclature*

Secretariat of the Commission,
at the British Museum (Natural History),
Cromwell Road, LONDON, S.W.7.

8th January 1944.

⁴ See pp. 75-84 above.

THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE COMMISSION.

(obtainable at the Publications Office of the Commission at 41, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7.)

Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature.

This journal has been established by the International Commission as their Official Organ in order to provide a medium for the publication of :—

- (a) proposals on zoological nomenclature submitted to the Commission for deliberation and decision ;
- (b) comments received from, and correspondence by the Secretary with, zoologists on proposals published in the *Bulletin* under (a) above : and
- (c) papers on nomenclatorial implications of developments in taxonomic theory and practice.

Three Parts have so far been published : Part 1 (introductory, including an account of the functions and powers of the Commission and a summary of the work so far achieved) ; Part 2 (relating to the financial position of the Commission) ; Part 3 (containing the official records of the decisions taken by the Commission at their meeting at Lisbon in 1935).

Opinions and Declarations Rendered by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

Volume 1 will contain *Declarations 1-9* (which have never previously been published) and *Opinions 1-133* (the original issue of which is now out of print). *Parts 1-12* (containing *Declarations 1-9* and *Opinions 1-3*) have now been published.

Volume 2 commences with *Declaration 10* and *Opinion 134*. *Parts 1-25* (containing *Declarations 10-12* and *Opinions 134-155*) have so far been published. The titles of these *Opinions* are given on the wrappers to *Parts 1* and *2* of the *Bulletin*. Other *Parts* will be published shortly.

AN URGENT APPEAL FOR A FUND OF £1800 TO ENABLE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION TO CONTINUE ITS WORK

The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature urgently appeal for grants to the above Fund to Museums, Research Institutes and other Institutions concerned with any branch of zoology ; to Learned Societies and Associations concerned with any aspect of zoology ; to Institutions and Learned Societies in the fields of Agriculture, Horticulture, Medicine and Veterinary Science, all of whom have a direct interest in that portion of the work of the Commission which is concerned with the stabilisation of Zoological Nomenclature ; to University and other Departments engaged in the teaching of zoology as being directly interested to secure stability in the scientific nomenclature used in biological text-books ; and to every individual zoologist who may be in a position to contribute to the funds of the Commission. Full particulars of the purposes for which the above Fund is required are given in Part 2 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*.

Contributions of any amount, however small, will be most gratefully received. They should be addressed to the Commission at their Publications Office, 41, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7. Bankers' drafts, cheques, and Postal Orders, should be made payable to the "International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature" and crossed "Account payee. Coutts & Co."

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
RICHARD CLAY AND COMPANY, LTD.,
BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

